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ACTIVIST GAUTAM NAVLAKHA GETS BAIL IN ELGAR PARISHAD CASE

The Supreme Court on Tuesday lifted the stay on the bail granted by the Bombay High Court in December 2023, in view of the lengthy trial

FOUR YEARS ON, CHARGES YET TO BE FRAMED

The HC had stayed the bail for three weeks to allow the NIA to appeal. The SC bench of justices M M Sundresh and S V N Bhatti refused to extend the stay. "The appellant has been in incarceration for more than four years and charges are yet to be framed. The trial would take years and years and years for completion. Thus, we are not inclined to extend the stay," it said

IN HOUSE ARREST SINCE NOVEMBER 2023

- Navlakha, who was arrested in August 2018, has been placed under house arrest since November 2023. He is currently residing in Navi Mumbai
- The case relates to alleged inflammatory speeches made at the Elgar Parishad conclave in Pune on December 31, 2017, which police claim triggered violence the next day near the Koregaon-Bhima war memorial | P9

₹20 lakh

AMOUNT TO BE PAID BY NAVLAKHA TOWARDS SECURITY DURING HIS HOUSE ARREST

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Day after, AAP admits assault on Maliwal

ANUP VERMA @ New Delhi

A day after Aam Aadmi Party leader Swati Maliwal accused Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's private secretary Bibhav Kumar of misbehaving with her, the party sought to limit the damage by admitting the crime, adding stern action would be taken against the accused.

Swati Maliwal is AAP's Rajya Sabha member and former head of the Delhi Commission for Women. She was assaulted at the chief minister's residence on Monday.

Maliwal alerted the police but did not file a formal complaint.

The party took more than 30 hours to react to the controversy that came bang in the middle of the general elections.

"Yesterday (Monday) morning, Maliwal went to Arvind Kejriwal's residence to meet him. While she was waiting in the drawing room, Bibhav Kumar came there and misbehaved with Swati Maliwal. She had reported the incident to the police by calling on the number 112. We deeply condemn this incident. Kejriwal has taken cognisance of the incident and called for strict action," said party leader Sanjay Singh.

Maliwal, Singh said, is one of the oldest and senior-most AAP leaders. "We are all standing with her. The chief minister has taken this issue seriously and strict action will follow. I want to make it clear that the AAP does not support such people," he added.

As per the police log, a PCR call from Maliwal came in at 9.34 am on Monday, alleging that she had been assaulted by one of the chief minister's staff. "As per information, the lady is saying that she is at the CM's house and has been assaulted by CM's PA Bibhav Kumar," a note on the PCR call read.

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva lit into the AAP's silence on the incident on Monday, saying it reflected the mentality of the party.

Maliwal had gone to meet Kejriwal at his residence. While she was waiting to meet him in the drawing room, Bibhav Kumar misbehaved with her. This is highly condemnable — Sanjay Singh

PM files papers amid show of NDA strength

Modi waves after filing his papers for the LS elections in Varanasi on Tuesday | PTI

PEP TALK FOR CADRE

Modi concluded his two-day visit to Kashi by addressing a gathering of party workers and exuded confidence about the NDA victory in the polls. He urged party workers to maintain the momentum till the last phase of voting on June 1

NAMITA BAJPAI @ Lucknow

SEEKING a third term as member of Parliament from Varanasi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday filed his nomination papers amid great fanfare and symbolism in the presence of a whole array of NDA allies, chief ministers and Union ministers.

Before filing his papers during the auspicious *Pushya Nakshatra* on the day of *Ganga Saptami* (River Ganga is believed to have flown down to earth on this day), Modi offered prayers to the holy river at Dashashwamedh Ghat under the guidance of K Venkat Raman Ghanapathy, a member of Kashi Vishwanath Temple Trust, along with three priests from Tamil Nadu and one each from Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra.

He paid obeisance at the Kashi Kotwal Kaal Bhairav temple before proceeding to the collectorate to file his papers amid chants of *Har Har Mahadev*. At the district magistrate's office, four persons — Ganeshwar Shastri Dravid, Baijnath Patel, Lalchand Kushwaha and Sanjay Sonkar — representing different sections of the society, proposed Modi's name for nomination from the constituency.

Dravid is the high priest who had determined the auspicious time for the consecration of the Ram temple at Ayodhya and had supervised the rituals. Baijnath Patel is a party worker since the days of Jan Sangh. Lalchand Kushwaha represents the OBC community and Sanjay Sonkar is a Dalit.

Prominent among the dignitaries present included BJP's national president J P Nadda, ministers Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, and Ramdas Athawale; chief ministers Yogi Adityanath, Eknath Shinde, and Conrad Sangma; former Andhra CM Chandrababu Naidu and NCP leader Praful Patel.

Ex-Indian Army officer with UN killed in Gaza

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

COLONEL Waibhav Anil Kale, a former Indian Army officer who had joined a UN agency in Gaza barely two months ago, was killed when the vehicle he was travelling in came under attack in war-torn Rafah in Gaza, becoming the first 'international casualty' for the world body since the Israel-Hamas conflict started.

Colonel Waibhav Anil Kale

Kale, 46, is survived by his wife and two teenage children. After taking premature retirement from the Indian Army in 2022, he joined the UN as a security coordination officer in the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (DSS) recently. His family is settled in Pune.

CONTINUED ON: P5

Caste looms over temple in Ayodhya

NAMITA BAJPAI @ Lucknow

UTTAR Pradesh's Faizabad constituency, comprising Ayodhya, could be easily mistaken for the nerve centre of temple politics but if past Lok Sabha elections are anything to go by, the poll outcome in this temple town has mostly been tied to the caste factor. And the 2024 LS poll is no different. Sitting BJP MP Lallu Singh, also a five-time MLA from Ayodhya, is pitted against the Samajwadi Party's Awadhesh Prasad, a nine-time MLA and a former minister in the Akhilesh cabinet.

SHOWTIME FOR GLADIATORS

Lallu Singh, who is a contractor by profession, is seeking a third term riding on the back of the general goodwill for the BJP after the Ram temple construction in Ayodhya and the resultant development in the district. In 2014, he had polled an impressive winning margin of 2.8 lakh votes, which however came down drastically to just 65,000 in 2019. This time, he is fighting anti-incumbency and a formidable SP candidate, who has the support of the Congress.

The SP-Congress combine hopes their joint candidate can defeat the BJP this time. However, votes tell a different story. In 2019, the BJP had bagged 5,29,021 votes, while the SP got 4,63,544 and the Congress 53,386. This time, a third factor could influence poll calculations as the CPI has fielded former IPS officer Arvind Sen as its candidate. Sen is the son of veteran politician late Mitrasen Yadav, who had represented the constituency thrice in Parliament. Sen is expected to poll a considerable number of votes from the same electorate pool that the SP hopes to tap into.

All this boils down to the constituency's caste dynamics, which can swing results. The BJP has retained Singh, a Thakur by caste, for the battle in the land of Lord Ram, who himself was a Rajput. The saffron party has the support of Thakurs and other upper castes as well as a section of non-Yadav OBCs. SP candidate Prasad comes from the Dalit Kori community and is trying to mobilise Dalits, who constitute a sizeable population of 5.5 lakh in the constituency. He can also expect help from the SP's traditional Muslim-Yadav vote bank. Meanwhile, CPI's Sen, an OBC, is getting traction among his caste group on the ground. The BSP has also fielded Sachidanand Pandey, a Brahmin, as its candidate for Faizabad but the community is not strong enough to create a ripple.

Awadhesh Prasad (left) and Lallu Singh

ILLUSTRATION: MANDAR PARDIKAR

21-year-old B'luru student jumps off college building

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

A 21-year-old third-year engineering student allegedly died by suicide by jumping from the fifth floor of a private college building in Bengaluru South on Tuesday. The deceased has been identified as C Rahul from Ballari. Rahul lived with his mother. His father works abroad.

It is alleged that the student took the extreme step as he was denied entry into the examination hall as he was late. He had to write his first paper of the sixth semester examination. It is also alleged that Rahul was told that he would not be allowed to participate in campus placements.

DCP (Southeast) CK Baba said the incident happened around 10.30 am. The probe will begin after the student's father arrives in the country and files a complaint. P5

More thunderstorms forecast till monsoon

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

THE India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an alert for more thunderstorms and dust storms in the coming days, till the onset of south west monsoon, while there is no heat wave alert for the state or the country.

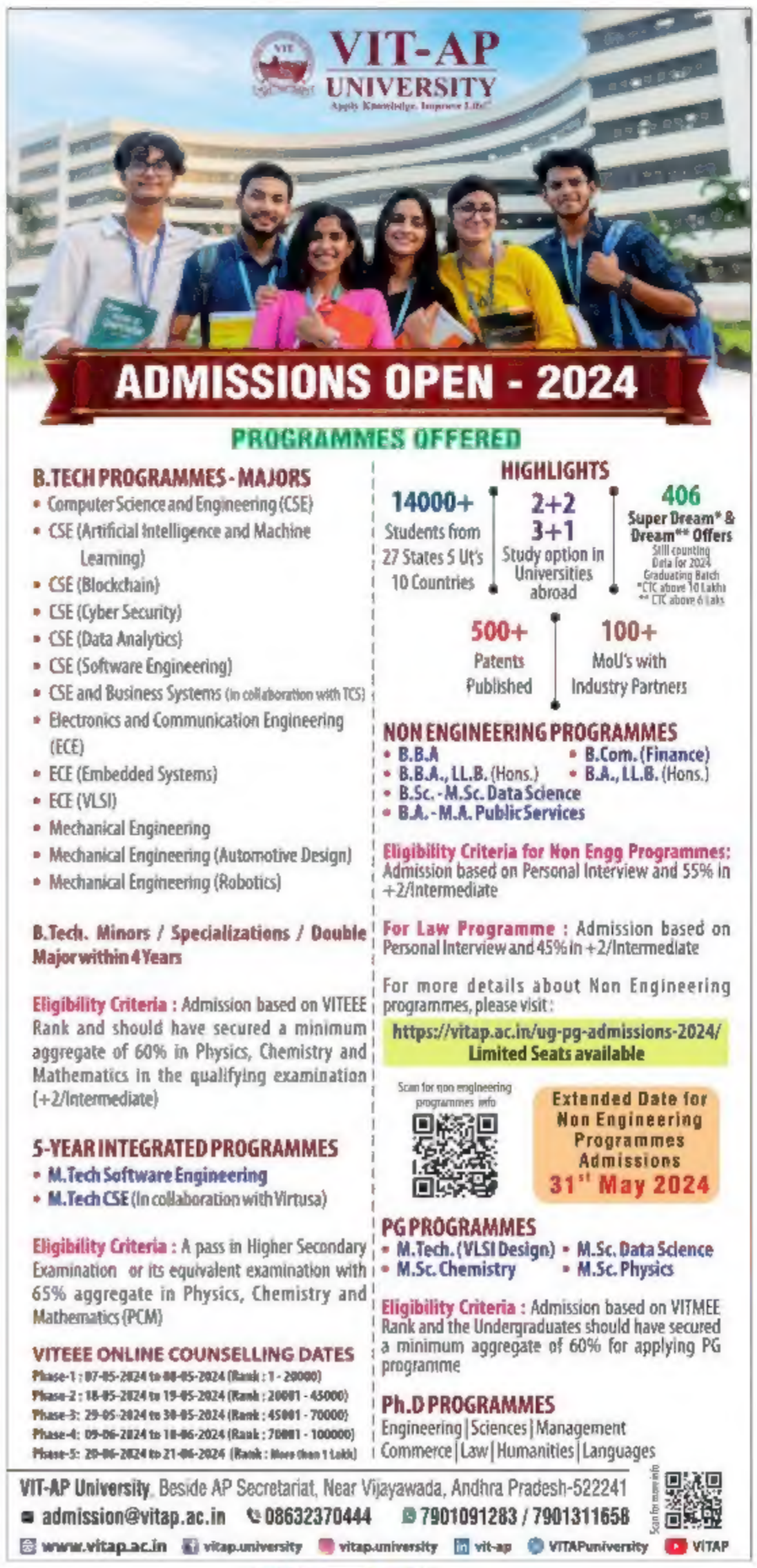
Citing the Ghatkopar incident where an illegal hoarding came crashing down on a fuel outlet, claiming at least 14 lives, the department has advised people to be cautious, alert and safe. Similar incidents may occur due to thunderstorms or dust storms.

A vehicle submerged in a pit near Vijnanapura, Bengaluru. The underpass was waterlogged due to Monday night rain in the city | KEWIN BYJU

Director General of Meteorology Mrutyunjay Mohapatra told TNIE that due to the prolonged hot and dry spell and less humidity, dust storms are being reported in states such as Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan. More such storms could occur in the coming days, he said.

"We have also issued an alert for thunderstorms in most parts of the country, including the ghats and southern peninsula, in the coming days till the onset of monsoon," he said.

CONTINUED ON: P5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HIGHLIGHTS
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